

# Massenet's Opera, "La Navarraise," Is Revived by Gatti

Performance, With Mme. Farrar, Acceptable, but Not Distinguished; Give "Cavalleria Rusticana"

By H. E. Krehbiel

The audience at the Metropolitan Opera House last night gave their full approval of the revival of Massenet's "La Navarraise," which followed "Cavalleria Rusticana," a familiar and vital tragedy of life, the curse of whose popularity is found in the progeny to which it gave birth. To this progeny belongs Massenet's opera, for which, when it was produced at the Metropolitan as a novelty on December 11, 1895, we predicted a short life. Many a better opera has been born and died since then, and why it should have been called back into life after being among the shades in the limbo of forgetfulness, we cannot explain on artistic grounds. No doubt Mr. Gatti's reasons for conjuring it back are purely practical. He was long in search of a companion piece for "Puccini," now that that opera must have a consort with a popular representative.

Mme. Farrar is still willing to add to her repertoire and may have had an ambition to exploit her dramatic ability in a role which demands tragic intensity, if nothing else. We do not think the choice was a wise one or that she will long persist in it. It offers her no new and appealing nuance, and her performance cannot endure comparison with that of the artist for whom the work was written, but which even she could not make permanently attractive. When she joined Mr. Hammerstein's forces at the Manhattan Opera House in 1906 the opera was resurrected for her. Then Mr. Hammerstein kept it on his list to the end of the Manhattan's career because Massenet's opera was the staple of his French list, and he had a fine tragic singer in Mme. Gerville-Réache. If war operas had been popular pabulum from 1914 to 1919, and Mr. Gatti had a capable representative of the woman of Navarre, those seasons might have sufficed for its restoration, for "Germania" had to be discarded because it was a glorification of German patriotism, and "L'Attaque du Moulin" could not serve during the period of American neutrality and had not even enough favor before then to justify its revival after. Besides, it would have been offensive to our German fellow citizens whose sympathies were given to their Fatherland. There would have been no objection, of course, as there is none

now, to the spectacle of Spaniards at war with each other. Neither, we fancy, would a protest be raised if "Les Huguenots" was to be revived, though, as Heine observed, it is an opera in which Catholics and Protestants kill each other to music made by a Jew.

However, all this is perhaps idle comment. "La Navarraise" is with us again, its plot as ethically and dramatically faulty as ever, its music more pallid, its prospects just as problematical. The principal change which we observed last night was the loss of the tragic horror which Madame Calvé injected into it by her action in the final scene, and a greater moderation in the expenditure of gunpowder. The latter deficiency can be supplied if Mr. Gatti wishes to do so; the former cannot, for neither in voice nor dramatic manner does Mme. Farrar meet the requirements of the titular role.

"La Navarraise" is a perversion of a story told by Jules Claretie, under the title "La Cigarette." In scene and time the drama harks back to the time of the Carlist war in Spain. Garrido, a general of the Liberalist troops, has been defeated in an engagement by General Zuccaraga. Smothered under the humiliation, he sets a price on the head of his enemy. He is overheard by Anita, a girl from Navarre, who has just learned that she cannot marry Aracqui, a sergeant in Garrido's army, unless she brings to him a dowry equal to the sum which his father intends to bestow upon him. "Dot pour dot," are the words which keep ringing in her ears after a meeting with her lover and his father. The sum is 2,000 duros. She approaches Garrido: How much will he pay for the assassination of Zuccaraga? "Two thousand duros," Her mind conceives a fearful resolve—she will murder Zuccaraga and earn the dowry which shall enable her to marry her lover. She slinks off through the night. Aracqui, wickedly warned, follows her and sees her enter the enemy's camp. She commits the crime, claims and receives the reward. But Aracqui, who returns to the Liberalist camp wounded unto death, charges her with faithlessness and casts her off as one who had sold her honor for gold. In the neighboring village, which is in the hands of Zuccaraga's troops, the bells toll and a messenger comes bearing word that the general has died by an assassin's dagger. Aracqui realizes the truth and sinks back into his arms, a victim with an exclamation of horror. Anita goes mad and, her mind all awry, transforms the funeral bells into wedding chimes.

She grasps her lover's hand to lead him to church, but he falls a clod at her feet. Mme. Calvé used to pull open her eyes, gaze at the dull balls beneath them, look for a moment at the spectators in the theater with an expression that sent them home to dream nightmares, and fall across Aracqui's body with a shriek. All this is supposed to take place within a few hours and amid the almost continuous noise of battle.

It was the perfection of Mme. Calvé's impersonation of the Navarraise which most convincingly published the artistic hollowness of the drama. A woman, out of her love for a man commits murder in the hope of securing the means to become his wife, must excite our sympathy. If she wishes to be accepted as a legitimate tragic figure, admiration of the character is out of the question, perhaps even pardon also; but consideration and pity must remain. Mme. Calvé did not arouse these feelings; neither did Mme. Farrar, whose capacity to give expression to the horrible is much below that of the actress who played the role in the acceptance of the play as sincere was created by Henri Cain, who, in order that we might have our full pennyworth of horrors, changed M. Claretie's story so as to make Anita the assassin instead of Aracqui. The great love of a man might have spurred him on to such a deed; so might the love mingled with patriotism of a woman like Anita. But Calvé's Anita is to our eyes, ears and feelings only an onerous puppet—created to give a woman an opportunity which she craved to wallow in the blood and filth with which the young Italian veritists were heaping their dramatic muck-carts a quarter of a century ago.

The performance last night was acceptable, but in no wise distinguished. What could be made of the character of Garrido, Mr. Rothier made of it; but neither in bearing, action nor song did he give the role the dignity which the Spanish soldier, who rushed on and off the scene at the call of trumpets and musketry. Equally commonplace were Signor Crimi (Aracqui) separate himself from the commonplace rout of Spanish soldiers, who rushed on and off the scene at the call of trumpets and musketry. Equally commonplace were Signor Crimi (Aracqui) separate himself from the commonplace rout of Spanish soldiers, who rushed on and off the scene at the call of trumpets and musketry. Equally commonplace were Signor Crimi (Aracqui) separate himself from the commonplace rout of Spanish soldiers, who rushed on and off the scene at the call of trumpets and musketry.

# Pierce Oil Co. Plans Profit Sharing Program

Subscriptions for 70,000 Shares Received From Employees and Officials

The Pierce Oil Corporation announced yesterday that it would shortly put into effect a profit sharing plan for its employees similar to those now in operation among many of the larger industrial concerns of the country. The company said that it had already received subscriptions from operating officials and employees in excess of 70,000 shares of common stock.

Application has been made to list the additional stock on the Stock Exchange and this stock will be used for the profit sharing plan. The offer is being made to all operating officials and employees, both in the United States and Mexico, where the company is not only a producer, but a large refiner and distributor of oil and oil products.

Subscriptions received thus far have come only from the company's employees in the United States.

# The Stage Door

The opening of "The Fair Circassian," scheduled for Monday at the Republic Theatre, has been postponed to Tuesday, December 6.

The Provincetown Players announce the final performance of "The Verge" for Saturday night. On Monday, Theodore Dreiser's "The Hand of the Potter" will be presented, under the direction of Charles O'Brien Kennedy.

Ted Shawn will give a dance recital at the Apollo Theatre to-morrow afternoon.

"The Squaw Man" in which William Faversham secured a big success some six weeks ago, is to be revived this season, according to recent advice.

"Little Miss Raffles," the new musical play, with Vivienne Segal and Lawrence Grossmith in the featured roles, will open at the Astor Theatre December 13. The out-of-town presentation will be made to-night in Stamford.

"The White Peacock," with Mme. Olga Petrova, will open at the Comedy Theatre on December 25 with a matinee performance.

An English producing firm has contracted with Edith Ellis for the London production of "The White Villain," with Ethel Irving for the star.

William Faversham will close his season at "The Silver Fox" at Maxine Elliott's Theatre on December 10.

Allen Lloyd, the English comedian, will appear at the Winter Garden early next month.

Daniel Frohman will be guest of honor at the meeting of the Playwrights' Club at the Manhattan Hotel to-morrow night. Channing Pollock will be the speaker of the evening.

Ether Howard and Arthur Hoey have become members of the company supporting next Tuesday at 5 o'clock, for all persons interested in the condition of the theater and plans for its betterment.

William A. Brady has called a meeting at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre for next Tuesday at 5 o'clock, for all persons interested in the condition of the theater and plans for its betterment.

## EPHROSTORS

3rd Ave. 23rd St. 2nd Floor

5th Ave. 23rd St. 2nd Floor

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## PRISCILLA DEAN

in "CONFLICT"

and Supreme Vaudeville

## PAULINE LORD

in "ANNA CHRISTIE"

and "The 1st Year"

## JOHN BARRYMORE

in "The Lotus Eater"

and "The 1st Year"

## DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

in "The Three Musketeers"

and "The 1st Year"

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## SHUBERT VAUDEVILLE

Always a Thrill

WINTER GARDEN 44th St. Theatre

## THE BAT

and "The 1st Year"

## JOHN BARRYMORE

in "The Lotus Eater"

and "The 1st Year"

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## JOHNSON-BOMBO

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## THE BAT

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## CENTURY—LAST 2 WEEKS

SOTHERN-MARLOWE

and "The 1st Year"

## THE BAT

and "The 1st Year"

## JOHN BARRYMORE

in "The Lotus Eater"

and "The 1st Year"

## DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

in "The Three Musketeers"

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